



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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FORMER CBP AIRCRAFT MECHANIC PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING FLIGHT EQUIPMENT

TUCSON, Ariz. - James Williams, formerly a contract mechanic employed at the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) aircraft facility in Tucson, pleaded guilty yesterday to Theft of Government Property. Williams, 37, of Tucson, was charged stealing a \$6,972.39 pair of night vision goggles (NVGs) from CBP, selling them on eBay and keeping the proceeds.

At his change of plea hearing, Williams admitted that over the weekend of August 10-13, 2007, while he was working at the Air Branch Facility, he took a pair of NVGs, a battery pack and carrying case from the CBP aircraft facility on Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, where he worked as an aircraft mechanic. Williams posted the goggles for sale on eBay. On September 3, 2007, he sold them to a person in Arizona for \$3,700 and kept the money from the unauthorized sale.

Alerted to the eBay sale, investigators contacted the Arizona buyer and learned that he had resold them via eBay to a man in Fairbanks, Alaska. Upon recovering the goggles from the Alaska buyer, investigators found that although some serial numbers on the device had been obliterated, serial numbers on the eyepieces and objective lenses matched those of the stolen pair. Neither eBay buyer realized the goggles were stolen, and both cooperated with authorities. The goggles had originally been purchased by CBP in 2005 for \$6,972.39.

Sentencing is set before Chief Judge John M. Roll on December 10, 2008. A conviction for Theft of Government Property carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, Judge Roll will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Professional Responsibility, with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Lab, the Alaska State Police and ITT Industries. The prosecution is being handled by Mary Sue Feldmeier, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-0600-TUC-JMR-(BPV)
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